

A new round of encounters proposed by the Apostolic Movement in Rome

The mission of the Apostolic Movement in the Diocese of Rome has progressively improved over the years, through the dedication and discreet and communion work of so many people, eager to live the charisma of proclamation and remembrance of the Gospel. Today, along with the commitment of lay people within the parishes, in the different areas of ecclesial life (from the catechistic to that of charity, passing through the liturgical one), and in the presence of the consecrated persons of the "Mary Mother of the Redemption" Association, the Apostolic Movement offers every week to all the faithful in three parts of the capital (St. Roman martyr, St. Mary of the Carmel, St. Joseph at Casaletto and St. Judas Taddeus Parishes), catechetical meetings and those to deepen the charisma.

Since last year, at the St. Roman martyr parish, alongside these types of encounter, a new formative experience has matured. These are a series of thematic encounters, proposed by the Apostolic Movement and realized with the collaboration of the different realities present in the Parish; an instrument of evangelization which, while it opens a further path so that the Gospel can

reach the heart of men, it promotes communion among charismas within the ecclesial community. Encounters of the past year, devoted to love in the context of family relationships, aroused great interest, moving to continue on the journey undertaken. Therefore, it has been chosen to continue on reflecting on love in the light of the Gospel, this time, however, in a more general sense.

The itinerary of "The steps of Love" - this is the title of this year's journey - is structured into nine meetings, divided into two parts, expressing the two fundamental movements of love: the reception of love from God and giving back the received love. Thus, the itinerary draws a parable that descends from the Father, the beginning of everything and the source of love (first encounter) and goes up to the eschatological fulfilment of everything in him, with the final judgment (last encounter). The first part of the path, Love received, is a glimpse at the Most Holy Trinity, communion of people, source and model of love. The second part, Love given back, looks at the different dimensions in which the person is called to live love according to God (spiritual, relational, social, affective-sexual, community, eschatological).

Finally, the "steps" of the title recall the image of the path that each one is called to accomplish, to the perfection of charity, which is the essence of the Gospel and the full realization of the human vocation. They also evoke the theme of accompanying parents in the education of teenage children, on which the Diocese of Rome is committed to reflect this year. The cycle of encounters wants to be part of this path of the Roman Church, to train young people and adults of the Christian community to be family caregivers on the footsteps of Love.

Come, blessed by my Father

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus concludes his public teaching with three truths about the eternal lot of every man. Whoever is the body of Christ will be judged according to the law of the body of Christ. Faith must produce fruit of faith. Every Word of faith must be transformed into life. This is the oil that makes of Christian life a light enlightening the world with the purest truth of God. Every man, and it is the second judgment, has received from God gifts that concern his soul, his spirit and his body. Every gift both natural and supernatural must be put to fruition. With it one must reveal to the world not only the beauty of every grace of our God but he must also cooperate with the Lord to make his creation a more and more welcoming home to every man. It suffices to put to fruit only one gift to give true life to the whole earth.

Everything on earth is a gift from God. Material goods are his gift. Time is his gift. Matter and time must be lived according to God's will. They are given to us so that with them we make us a gift to others. A dress, a bit of bread, a glass of water are within everybody's reach. Every man is called to give what is superfluous to him, but also what is excess to his body. It would be enough not to give our body what harms to solve all the problems of poverty on earth. Suffices it to think that for vices they spend billions and billions just to keep them. Then, to cure the illnesses that every vice produces, billions multiply infinitely. It would be sufficient that

the Christian, by special vocation, and every man by nature's vocation were freed from vices and humanity would breathe great love.

This rule also applies to time. Even time is God's gift to be shared with the sick, imprisoned, alone and abandoned brothers. A bit of time given and offered to them, frees them from hopelessness, solitude and despair that arise from feeling useless people in the world. The Christian must live everything according to a particular vision of faith. He must think, sharing his things and his time, that he does everything to Christ Jesus. Another truth of faith reveals to us that what we do to Christ on earth in the person of the poor, He will do it to us in eternity. Without a pure vision of faith, nothing will be lived according to faith and man imprisons his life in himself and in time. He will miss the vision of transcendence and eternal blessedness.

Today we can state that what has so far been said is no longer needed to man. The Christian has deprived every word of Jesus of truth. Heaven is given to everyone regardless of faith, lived or hidden talents and made or not made works of good. May the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, help us to put the Word of Jesus back on the candlestick so that it lightens our hearts and for the light of our faith the whole world is illuminated with the truth and righteousness of the Lord.

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Missionary passion

Reflections from the Letter of H.H. Francis on the occasion of the centenary of the Apostolic Letter "Maximum illud" (22.10.2017)

With the Letter of October 22, addressed to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Pope Francis called for an extraordinary missionary month for the coming October 2019 "in order to further awaken the consciousness of the *missio ad gentes*." In fact, awakening the heart of the Christian, reviving the Lord who lives in us is the starting point for every true apostolate. Even before modifying structures and programs, the Holy Father reminds us that it is necessary to re-ignite the heart of those who are called to bring Jesus to that part of the world that still does not know or who has already forgotten him.

Pope Francis knows it well and writes it also in his letter: any missionary activity, any work of material and spiritual charity, is born and feeds exactly from a double passion that animates the true disciple of the Lord, an inner passion that flows and feeds from the personal adherence to the Word of the Gospel and from that experienced charity that has always animated the life of the saints.

Making mission, being an outgoing Church, transforming into a missionary sense any structure that has become obsolete, that is no longer corresponding to the evangelizing essence of the Church, stems from an awareness that seeks a change. That is why the Pope invites us to "overcome the recurring temptation that hides behind every ecclesial introversion, every self-referential closure in personal safe boundaries, every form of pastoral pessimism and every sterile nostalgia of the past and to open us instead to the joyful novelty of the Gospel". In this way, the profound

passion for Jesus truly becomes one with the passion for his people, indeed, right this latter becomes the criterion of verifying our own belonging to the living and true God. For Pope Francis, the two passions are always together and communicating. Indeed, we cannot love God unless we imitate Him who, first, has left heaven becoming mercy and justice among us, the first who moved so that the heart of every man is kindled again to return to love God and the brothers.

So the Church's current challenge is also played within this twofold passion that leads to "not leaving things as they are" and "not to continue to live with the simple administration of the existent." This time asks to be courageous, or to say it in Pope Francis' words, to "transform everything, because habits, styles, timetables, language and all ecclesial structures become an appropriate channel for the evangelization of the present world, more than for self-preservation." In this sense, the Acts of the Apostles are a good reading to be done for creating "passion". That particular story can help to focus on the first apostolic passion for that announcement, that does not simply inform on facts and people, but that opens up to conversion, to the mortification of the heart, to that change of life that admits into lived charity, the sign of Christ in the world. The Acts of the Apostles educate to think of a Church from the beginning the servant of a Word that is not ours, a new, alive and effective word, and therefore bearer of a transforming power of history.

Father Domenico Concolino

SUNDAY
ROMAN
RITE

HE WILL SEPARATE THEM ONE FROM ANOTHER
O.L. Jesus Christ King of the Universe Solemnity - Year A

I WILL JUDGE BETWEEN ONE SHEEP AND ANOTHER (Ez 34,11-12.15-17)
God sees the abandonment of his flock. The Shepherds he constituted use the sheep only to get enriched, gaining only personal benefits. Abandoned to themselves, even the sheep live in great injustice to each other. The overbearing ones take advantage of the weaker ones, preventing them from feeding and making their lives bitter. The Lord announces his decision. He will come and judge the shepherds for their omission and every personal use made of his flock. He will also judge between sheep and sheep. The shepherd may also be uninterested in the sheep. Nevertheless, the sheep must never go against the other sheep, causing it harm. Finally he reveals that He himself will take care of his flock. We know that his decision will be fully accomplished in Christ Jesus and for Him. Jesus is the God who was made in the flesh the Father's Shepherd, to guide the Father's flock to the evergreen pastures.

AT HIS COMING, THOSE WHO BELONG TO CHRIST (1 Cor 15: 20-26,28)
Holy Scripture is perfect in language and therefore it is perfect in truth. Saint Paul announces the mystery of the resurrection of Christ to the Corinthians, which is the model of our resurrection on the last day. Risen Christ is the primacy of the works of God that will constitute his new sky and his new earth. But who will rise up being clothed with the same resurrection as Jesus Christ? Who will dress his glorious, spiritual, incorruptible and immortal body? Paul's word is divinely clear. They will be clothed with the resurrection of Christ those who are Christ's. Who is of Christ? He is of Christ who is of

his Word, that is, who lives in his Word and in his Gospel. You go out of the Gospel, you are out of Christ, you are not of Christ, Christ might not dress us with his glorious body. We did not wear Christ today, we did not dress up with Him today, tomorrow he might not dress us with his glorious and incorruptible body full of light.

I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE ME FOOD (Mt 25: 31-46)

The Gospel according to Matthew reveals the same truth announced us by Paul, but with different modes. Today, Christ Jesus presents himself to the Christian in the figure of the hungry, thirsty, naked, stranger, sick and jailed. If the Christian recognizes him as Christ and treats him as Christ, that is, he will feed him, will quench his thirst, dress him, receive him, console him, bring him the comfort of his presence rich of love, mercy, forgiveness and light, when from the earth he will pass into eternity, Jesus will recognize him before his Father and give him his eternal glory. However, if the Christian did not recognize him and consequently did not even serve him according to his possibilities, not even Christ will know him and will serve him. There will be a curse for him in the eternal fire. Being the Word of Christ Jesus, it is an eternal and immutable word. Men can also say the contrary and opposite. The Christian must know only one thing: that those who say the opposite of the Word of Jesus are false prophets. They must not be heard. Every Christian can also be a false prophet. The Word of Jesus is the only true one.

by the theologian,
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